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# FOR THE ARTS

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ISSUE 18 SPRING-SUMMER 2004



Canada Council  
for the Arts

Conseil des Arts  
du Canada

Canada

# LITERARY RENEWAL:

## INVESTING IN THEIR BRILLIANT CAREERS

CANADIAN LITERATURE WOULD BE NO MORE THAN A FIGMENT OF THE IMAGINATION IF IT WERE NOT FOR THOSE INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE PREPARED TO LIVE WITHOUT FINANCIAL SECURITY FOR THEIR CREATIVE ENDEAVOURS. LITERARY CREATION IS MORE THAN A MATTER OF INSPIRATION – WORDS GET PUT ONTO PAPER THANKS ALSO TO THE DETERMINATION AND SELFLESSNESS OF THOSE WHO DEVOTE THEIR LIVES TO THEIR CRAFT.

In this article, *For the Arts* goes to the source, and invites readers to discover three promising young writers whose brilliant careers are just beginning.

In 2003, Jacqueline Baker published her first short story collection, *A Hard Witching*. Her writing examines the small details of ordinary life yet is richly evocative, with a psychological depth that is more commonly found in novels than in stories. The richly detailed and thoughtfully drawn prose sheds light on the almost threatening banality of our lives. The events of the book, set in the Great Sand Hills region of Saskatchewan, have an historical authenticity and the shadows of the past are never far away. In early 2004, Jacqueline Baker was awarded the Howard O'Hagan Award for Short Fiction at the Alberta Book Awards and was a finalist for the Rogers Writers' Trust Fiction Prize; she recently received the City of Edmonton Book Prize as well as the 2004 Danuta Gleed Literary Award from the Writers' Union of Canada. Her collection is on the *Calgary Herald's* list of bestsellers. The young author, who hails from Saskatchewan and today makes her home in Edmonton, confesses that she writes very slowly, agonizing over every word and comma. Nevertheless, critics and readers alike are eagerly looking forward to her forthcoming first novel, for which she received a Canada Council grant in 2003.

Like Jacqueline Baker, Melanie Little published her first collection of short stories, *Confidence*, in 2003. Brilliant, contrasting and surprising, her stories are frank and tender as they explore the deceptive terrain of the emotions, where trust can quickly turn to treachery. Her characters – a disgruntled saleswoman, a father addicted to gambling, a little girl with one leg shorter than the other – are drawn so vibrantly that the reader cannot help but become involved, either loving or detesting them. *Confidence* was on the *Globe and Mail's* list of the 100 best books of 2003 and was hailed by critics for its refreshing, searing and intelligent prose. Little was a finalist for the Danuta Gleed Literary Award and was highly praised by the jury. She has published articles and stories in numerous anthologies and periodicals, as well as reviews in newspapers, and has received awards from the Writers' Union of Canada for a short story and the Periodical Writers Association of Canada for her journalism. The young writer lives in Ottawa, after having lived in Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver. Little's advice to young people who want to write is: read, read, and read some more. The Canada Council for the Arts supports both her and her advice.

To complete our trio of literary lights, the name Suzanne Myre follows naturally on those of Baker and

Little. Before she had even completed a degree in creative writing at the Université du Québec à Montréal, Myre won the Prix littéraire 2001 de Radio-Canada for her short story *ET phone home*. Her first collection of short stories, *J'ai de mauvaises nouvelles pour vous*, was followed by *Nouvelles d'autres mères*, which was a booksellers' choice finalist for the Grand Prix littéraire France-Québec (2003) and the Prix des libraires (2004), and winner of the Prix Adrienne Choquette (2004). This prolific young writer has just published her third book, *Humains aigres-doux*. Her writing is mischievous, acerbic, funny and tender, and its mood of self-ridicule is refreshing and invigorating. Suzanne Myre has a keen sense of observation that she employs in free-wheeling descriptions, exploring the quirks of human nature with a wonderful lack of inhibition. Although Myre likes to isolate herself, when she is writing, more and more people are discovering this fresh young talent. The Canada Council is proud to have played a part in this.

Like so many artists, these writers need a financial boost to be able to devote themselves to their art. With time, their books will bring greater fame and rewards. In the meantime, when you next visit your neighbourhood bookstore, remember that when you buy someone's book, you help them write the next one.



JACQUELINE BAKER



MELANIE LITTLE



SUZANNE MYRE



## UNMASKING CREATIVITY IN YOUTH

"AFTER ONE STORYTELLING SESSION, A HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT TOLD ME, 'THIS IS THE FIRST TIME SINCE I WAS 10 YEARS OLD THAT I'VE EVER SAT QUIETLY ENOUGH TO REALLY SIT INSIDE MY IMAGINATION.'"

Jennifer Cayley will never forget when a visual artist held a five-day mask-making workshop in Ottawa for teenaged drop-outs and potential drop-outs. "There was a young woman who was saying, 'I can't do this.' But by the end of the five days, she had made this amazing and expressive mask," explains Cayley, executive director of MASC ([www.masonline.ca](http://www.masonline.ca)), a regional arts education organization that connects art and learning.

"When we went around the table to give the kids an opportunity to talk about what they had done, this young woman had one thing to say: 'I've never made anything before!'"

For Cayley, that response emphasized the important role served by MASC, which she established 15 years ago with Jan Andrews, a two-time Governor General's Literary Award-nominated children's author. Today, MASC, headquartered at Fisher Park Public School in Ottawa, raises money from the public and private sectors (including the Canada Council) to bring the arts and culture alive for more than 120,000 young people in Eastern Ontario and Western Quebec. Every year, more than 60 professional

artists and arts groups conduct workshops and give performances in music, dance, drama, and the literary and visual arts to students from junior kindergarten to high school.

Last August, MASC also became a partner of ArtsSmarts – a national \$10-million education initiative launched in 1998 by the J.W. McConnell Family Foundation and designed to ignite young people's interest in learning core academic curricula through the arts.

In the Ottawa region, MASC provides schools and community groups with ArtsSmarts grants worth up to \$5,000 for projects that match artists with young people. As Cayley explains: "We want kids to discover themselves as creators, and we believe that one of the most powerful ways for that to happen is to get them working with artists. Studies have shown that when that creative engagement happens, kids will apply themselves to other areas of achievement, academic or otherwise."

This is borne out by the findings of the National Arts and Youth Demonstration Project, being undertaken by McGill University's School of Social Work and funded by

the Bronfman Foundation and the federal government. Preliminary results show that arts programs (in theatre, visual arts and filmmaking) lead to a measurable improvement in overcoming behavioural and emotional problems, in developing skills and in completing tasks.

Thus, in workshops, contemporary dancer Peter Ryan has encouraged students to express themselves by using a playground ball as a dance partner, while visual artist Liba David has introduced her young pupils to "organic recycling arts" and how to view natural material, normally destined for a compost bin, as artistic material.

Whether it's a visual artist or a story-teller without props or music, passion is unleashed and the audience becomes captive. As Cayley recalls: "After one storytelling session, a high school student told me, 'This is the first time since I was 10 years old that I've ever sat quietly enough to really sit inside my imagination.' Over and over again, teachers and parents are saying things like, 'This child has never written anything longer than a sentence before. Now he's writing pages of things.'"

Christopher Gully

# LONDON AND BERLIN CONNECTIONS

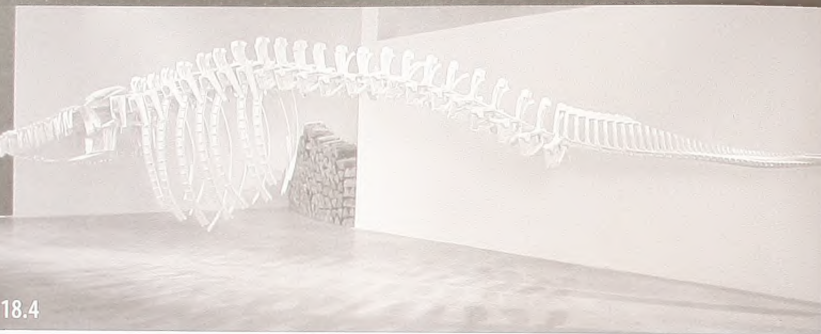
The Canada Council's International Residencies Program in Visual Arts has added the arts hot spots of Berlin and London to its international network. After an initial trial period, new residencies at the Künstlerhaus Bethanien international arts centre in Berlin and at SPACE Studios' new international centre, The Triangle, in London, join existing residencies in Paris, Port of Spain and New York. Sculptor Brian Jungen (Vancouver) and photographer and winner of the Duke and Duchess of York Prize in Photography Shari Hatt (Montreal) recently took advantage of Triangle facilities and training programs to have valuable exchanges with other artists at the centre's studios. Video artist Alexander Morrison (Vancouver), for his part, benefited from an artistic research residency at the Künstlerhaus Bethanien.

The result of a very fruitful collaboration between the Canada Council and the Department of Foreign Affairs, these residencies have a direct impact on the development of the visual arts: they ensure that Canadian art becomes known internationally, and they help artists to live from their art. There is no question but that Brian Jungen, winner of the Vancouver Institute for the Visual Arts Award (better known by its acronym VIVA) and the inaugural Sobey Award — given to an artist under the age of 40 — will continue on his successful path. As proof of this, the National Gallery of Canada, thanks to its new Joy Thomson Fund, recently purchased a second sculpture by Jungen, *Vienna* (an 8.5-metre-long sculpture of a whale skeleton built out of plastic lawn chairs). In announcing its acquisition, the Museum justly

described the young First Nations artist as a visionary. The Council has funded Jungen's work for many years, providing support for his work in Scotland, Austria, Finland and, of course, Canada. Reflecting on ecology, anthropology, ethnology and mythology, Jungen's work transforms ordinary consumer items into objects laden with new meaning that carry captivating and critical messages evoking the heritage of the First Nations.

Artistic and cultural outreach is based on a simple and time-tested formula: once artists make it on the international scene, they then establish contacts, expand their public, and the value of their work rises. Assisting in this outreach helps provide artists with the opportunity of living by their art.

*Ceology* (2002), plastic chairs, 14 x 2.5 x 1.25 m. Collection of Vancouver Art Gallery; courtesy of Catriona Jeffries Gallery.



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## MAKING A CASE FOR THE ARTS

IN AN EFFORT TO PROMOTE ARTS ADVOCACY AND ASSIST THE ARTS COMMUNITY AND OTHERS IN MAKING A CASE FOR THE ARTS, THE CANADA COUNCIL IS DEVOTING A SECTION OF ITS REVAMPED WEB SITE TO RESOURCES, FACTS AND ARGUMENTS DEMONSTRATING THAT THE ARTS ARE A GOOD DEAL FOR ALL CANADIANS.

Earlier this year, the City of Ottawa announced that it was going to slash its arts and culture budget (of \$1.7 million) by 80% in an effort to reduce costs. The response from the street was loud and clear: don't touch the small amount of money you invest in arts and culture. In addition to bombarding municipal politicians with phone calls, the opponents of the proposed move voted with their feet: several hundred citizens took part in a protest march to city hall. Ultimately, the city council voted 20-2 to restore full arts funding.

The Ottawa experience is by no means unique. In an environment where budgets are being squeezed and the arts are often vulnerable to cost-cutting measures, arts advocates are refreshing their thinking and rethinking their strategies. The Canada Council is part of this trend. In the last year, Council Director John Hobday has been proclaiming far and wide that 'arts advocacy' needs to be job-one for those in the arts as well as those in the broader community.

At this year's Chalmers Conference (organized by the Canadian Conference of the Arts), Hobday said it was 'time that all of us who care about the arts join together and take action. And by action, I'm referring to a sustained and



committed effort to convince decision-makers, community leaders, the media and the Canadian public of the crucial role the arts play in the quality of life of our citizens and in the economic and social development of our communities."

A growing number of municipal leaders are taking up this arts challenge. Many have been inspired by the work of economists such as Richard Florida, author of *The Rise of the Creative Class*. Florida claims that a lively arts community is an important factor in attracting skilled workers and economic growth (an argument put forward in the Ottawa case by CEOs).

To avoid "institutional sclerosis," cities and regions must encourage a diverse mix of activities and amenities. The most successful at doing this are high on what Florida calls "the Bohemian Index."

This view that the creative component is as crucial to progress and contentment as infrastructure is echoed by Canadian Senator and jazz musician Tommy Banks: "Cities [need] more than a good industrial park. Libraries ... concert halls, good schools, ballet and parks are every bit as important as airport connections," or, as former Winnipeg Mayor Glen Murray dubs the strictly utilitarian side of the equation, "police, pavement and pipes."

In an effort to promote arts advocacy and assist the arts community and others in making a case for the arts, the Canada Council is devoting a section of its revamped web site to resources, facts and arguments demonstrating that the arts are a good deal for all Canadians. Included are little-known facts about the arts, spending data, demographic information, arts attendance figures, and more. The information will be updated on a regular basis. (Please see: [www.canadacouncil.ca/aboutus/advocacy](http://www.canadacouncil.ca/aboutus/advocacy))

From left to right: Artists Molly Lamb Bobak and Bruno Bobak, the Hon. Marcia Babineau (representing Lieutenant Governor Herménégilde Cloutier), John Hobday and Pauline Bourque, Director of the New Brunswick Arts Board, at a reception for the arts community in Fredericton, May 2004. (Photo: Harry Mullins)



# ARCHITECTURE GAINING GROUND

THERE'S NO QUESTION THAT THE SHAPE AND STYLE OF CERTAIN BUILDINGS ATTRACT THE ATTENTION OF COUNTLESS PASSERS-BY. OVER THE LAST FIVE YEARS, THROUGH THE CITY OF TORONTO'S **DOORS OPEN TORONTO** INITIATIVE, A NUMBER OF BRILLIANTLY-DESIGNED BUILDINGS HAVE OPENED THEIR DOORS TO VISITORS. THE GENERAL PUBLIC CAN NOW TAKE A STEP BEYOND MERE CURIOSITY AND DISCOVER THE MANY FACETS OF CANADIAN ARCHITECTURE.

The 2004 edition of this innovative public event, with its particular emphasis on contemporary architecture, welcomed a record 185,000 visitors this May. The first event of its kind in North America, *Doors Open Toronto* has been a phenomenal success, highlighting not only the richness of the city's architectural heritage, but also the vitality, uniqueness and presence of contemporary architecture. This year, the Canada Council became a *Doors Open Toronto* partner.

The event's originality lies not only in the fact that it's free, but also in its unique combination of architecture, urbanism, art and tourism, which gives people the opportunity over a single week-end to discover Toronto's buildings and monuments and appreciate the value of architecturally-designed surroundings and the history that an architectural environment can embody. Based on a similar project in Europe involving some 40 countries, the concept has been adopted by hundreds of other communities throughout Canada (especially in Ontario). Through the *Doors Open* phenomenon, the accomplishments of Canadian architects are now publicly displayed among other of the world's architectural treasures.

One of the buildings on the *Doors Open Toronto* itinerary is the Chinese Cultural Centre, designed by Kuwabara Payne McKenna Blumberg Architects. KPMB recently won its ninth Governor General's Medal in Architecture. Awarded jointly by the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada and the Council, these medals pay tribute to Canadian architectural excellence. Besides KPMB Architects, this year's winning projects are by Busby + Associates Architects, Henriquez Partners Architects, Patkau Architects, Ian MacDonald Architect and Shim Suttcliffe Architects. See [canadacouncil.ca/news/releases](http://canadacouncil.ca/news/releases).

On another architectural front, the Council's new Professional Prix de Rome in Architecture has been awarded to Atelier BUILD of Montreal. Valued at \$50,000, the prize will permit architects Michael Carroll and Danita Rooyakkers to study urban architecture in the Netherlands and Japan, and to attend major architectural exhibitions in Venice and Vancouver.

Public recognition of architecture thus helps boost the discipline and enhances appreciation of this very public art form.

James Stewart Centre for Mathematics, McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario, 2003. KPMB Architects. (Photo: Eduard Hueber/Arch Photo, New York)

# INBRIEF

Ten Canada Council-supported artists won **JUNOs** at this year's music awards extravaganza in Edmonton. They included the Gryphon Trio (classical album), Murray Schafer and the Quatuor Molinari (classical composition), Susan Aglukark (Aboriginal recording), Le Vent du Nord (roots and traditional album) and Kiran Ahluwalia (world music album). In all, 55 artists or groups nominated in various categories received Council funding in recent years. The Council also sponsored a musical showcase at the awards in partnership with the CBC and JUNOFest.



Kiran Ahluwalia

Vancouver artist **Rebecca Belmore** will represent Canada at the 2005 Venice Biennale of Visual Art, the world's oldest and most prestigious venue for contemporary art. Belmore, an Anishnabekwe artist, addresses history and identity in her work, through sculpture, installation, video and performance. The Kamloops Art Gallery and UBC's Morris and Helen Belkin Gallery will mount the exhibit. Canadian participation is coordinated by the Canada Council for the Arts, the Canadian Embassy in Rome and the National Gallery of Canada.



White Thread (2003) by Rebecca Belmore. (Photo: Dong K. Hageman)

Writer, educator and spoken-word artist **Anthony Banskfield** is the Canada Council's new Equity Coordinator. A former senior policy analyst, equity communications officer and project manager at the Treasury Board, Banskfield has also worked as a technical writer, taught writing at the University of Montreal, Concordia and Humber College, taught ESL to immigrant youth in Montreal and managed literacy programs in Toronto. He has produced two spoken word CDs and organized a tour of African-Canadian spoken-word artists.

The Council's successful **Flying Squad program** (which provides capacity-building and planning assistance for theatre and dance companies) is being emulated in France. A group dedicated to the preservation of French cinema in the area of Oise has instituted a similar program to help small movie houses in their management, promotion, marketing and collaboration efforts.



## WRITER MARIA CAMPBELL RECEIVES 2004 MOLSON PRIZE

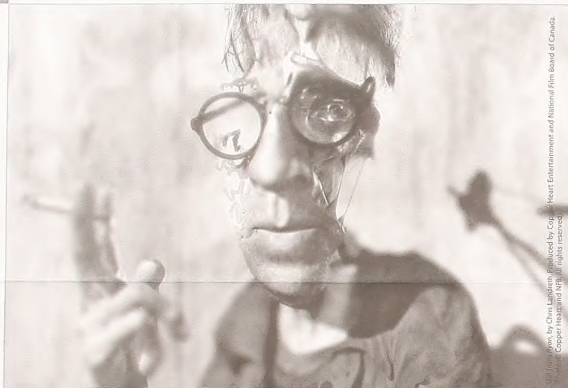
The 2004 Molson Prize winner in the arts is Maria Campbell, an Aboriginal writer, playwright, theatre producer and filmmaker. Her 1973 autobiography *Halfbreed* is one of the most widely taught texts in Canadian literature. She has also written a book based on oral stories and four children's books. Campbell lives in Gabriel's Crossing, Saskatchewan. The 2004 Molson Prize winner in the social sciences and humanities is child development specialist Richard Tremblay. Each Molson Prize is valued at \$50,000.

Other recent Canada Council prize winners include: Tom Sherman, winner of the \$10,000 Bell Canada Award in Video Art; violinist Jasper Wood, winner of the \$15,000 Virginia Parker Prize; cellist Kaori Yamagami and flutist Jocelyne Roy, co-winners of the Sylva Gelber Foundation Award (\$15,000 and \$10,500, respectively); and soprano Shannon Mercer, winner of the \$5,000 Bernard Diamant Prize. See: [www.canadacouncil.ca/prizes](http://www.canadacouncil.ca/prizes)

Molson Prize winner Maria Campbell (left) with a Canada Council board member Suzanne Richers-Burnett. (Photo: Lucian Karcia / AP Photos)

## RYAN SCORES HAT TRICK AT CANNES

The short animated film *Ryan*, by Toronto filmmaker Chris Landreth, has won three awards in the International Critics' Week (a parallel activity of the Cannes Film Festival): It won the Canal + Award, the Kodak Discovery Award and the Prix de la (Toute) Jeune Critique – all in the short film category. *Ryan* tells the affecting story of Ryan Larkin, a celebrated animator and Oscar nominee who now panhandles on the streets of Montreal. The film, which combines documentary with animation, is in a style that Landreth calls "psychological realism." The film, produced by the National Film Board, had early support from the Canada Council.



Short film *Ryan*, by Chris Landreth, produced by Cops + Heart Entertainment and National Film Board of Canada. (Photo: Copperhead/NFB. All rights reserved.)



## SIMON BRAULT APPOINTED VICE-CHAIR OF THE CANADA COUNCIL

Simon Brault of Montreal is the new Vice-Chair of the Canada Council. Mr. Brault has been Director General of the National Theatre School of Canada since 1997; he was its Administrative Director from 1992 to 1997. He was closely associated with the Forum d'action des milieux culturels de la métropole from 1994 to 1999. In 1997, Brault initiated *Journées de la culture*, a massive undertaking to popularize the arts and culture across Quebec. He is also a founding member of Culture Montréal and has been its elected Chair since it began in 2002.

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## READERSHIP SURVEY EXTENDED!

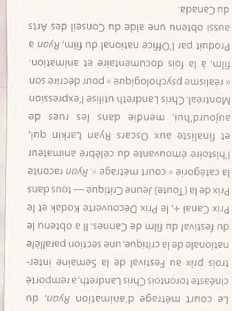
The Council's on-line survey of the readership of *For the Arts* has been extended. Participants can win a complete set of the seven 2003 Governor General's Literary Award-winning books, including fiction winner *Elle*, by Douglas Glover, and non-fiction winner *Paris 1919*, by Margaret MacMillan. The survey will take just a few minutes. Winning entrants will be contacted in September. Please visit the survey site at: [www.canadacouncil.ca/news/newsletters/](http://www.canadacouncil.ca/news/newsletters/)

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La quête en ligne de *Le Tour de France sur la piste littéraire* des participants concerné la chance de gagner la collection complète des livres couronnés des Prix littéraires du Gouverneur général de 2003, dont le roman *La maison étrangère* d'Elise Turcotte et le recueil de poésie *lignes* de Pierre Nepveu. Répondre à cette enquête ne prend que quelques minutes : vous êtes donc invités à visiter le site du sondage à [www.conseildesarts.ca/nouvelles/bulletins/](http://www.conseildesarts.ca/nouvelles/bulletins/). Les noms des gagnants seront divulgués d'ici la fin de septembre.

SIMON BRAULT EST NOMMÉ  
VICE-PRÉSIDENT DU CONSEIL  
DES ARTS DU CANADA

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de 50 000 \$ chacun.



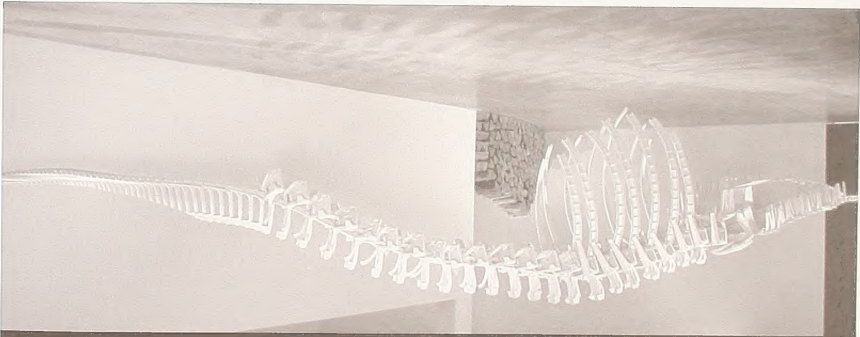
Chien ou Jean Ayres de Chris Landreth, une production de Copper Heart Entertainment et de l'Office national du film du Canada. (Photo: Copper Heart et CNF. Tous droits réservés.)

Sur le parcours de *Portes ouvertes* (nombreux ont pu adhérer le centre culturel chinois grâce au projet Kumbayon Payne KPMF Architects, firme qui remportait récemment sa deuxième Médaille du gouverneur général en architecture, décernée conjointement par le Conseil et l'Institut royal d'architecture du Canada, ses médailles viennent récompenser l'excellence architecturale canadienne. [www.kpmfarchitects.ca/nouvelles/communiquat](http://www.kpmfarchitects.ca/nouvelles/communiquat) offre une liste complète des projets réalisés par l'entreprise et ses associés. KPMF Architects, Urban Designers, KPMB Architects, Henriques Partners Architects, Henriques Partners Architects. À la fin de juin, la firme a été lauréate de 50 000 \$, ce prix permettra à Michael Carroli et Daniel Bouquayard de financer l'architecture urbaine holande et au Japon, et d'assister à des événements internationaux à Venise et à Vancouver. L'architecture gagne indéniablement à être connue et reconnue.

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Le développement des cinémas d'art et d'essai en France est le fait de deux émanations distinctes. En effet, un groupe de cinéastes des années 1960, les cinéastes de l'«*autre*», ont cherché à préserver dans les cinémas d'art et d'essai une certaine liberté de programmation, de sélection et de diffusion. Ils ont ainsi pu mettre en place un programme annuel de films et de réalisateurs, et ont pu ainsi développer une programmation de films et de réalisateurs, et ont pu ainsi développer une programmation de films et de réalisateurs.

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LE BIEN-FONDE DES ARTS

BIEN-FOUDÉ DES ARTS, LE CONSEIL DES ARTS DU CANADA CONSACRE UNE SECTION DE SON SITE WEB « RENOUVELÉ » AUX RESSOURCES, AUX FAITS ET AUX ARGUMENTS QUI PROUVENT QUE LES ARTS CONSTITUENT UNE RICHESSE POUR TOUS LES CANADIENNES ET TOUS LES CANADIENS.

« Cette idée que l'électeur peut être aussi important pour la zone ce que l'artiste l'est pour la ville est un véritable tournant. C'est une façon de voir le monde qui a permis de faire passer la culture de la culture de l'élite à la culture de tous. C'est une façon de voir le monde qui a permis de faire passer la culture de la culture de l'élite à la culture de tous. C'est une façon de voir le monde qui a permis de faire passer la culture de la culture de l'élite à la culture de tous. »

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« APRÈS UNE SÉRIE DE CONTES, ON LÈVE DO SECONDAIRE MATHÉMATIQUE ET L'ON EN PARLE. »



Le conteur Bob Barton participant à une activité de MASC dans une école de la région de Gatineau





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